



A STUDY OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS A DETERMINANT OF EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

Emotional intelligence is increasingly recognized as a cornerstone of professional success and organizational performance. It encompasses the ability to identify, understand, and manage one's emotions while effectively navigating interpersonal relationships. In the context of IT companies, where innovation and collaboration are vital, emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in enhancing individual and team performance. High emotional intelligence enables employees to cope with workplace stress, maintain composure under pressure, and exhibit resilience in challenging situations. It fosters better communication, empathy, and teamwork, which are essential for achieving organizational goals in a fast-paced, competitive environment. For leaders, emotional intelligence is indispensable in inspiring and motivating teams, resolving conflicts, and driving change management. This study explores the role of emotional intelligence as a determinant of employee performance, focusing on IT companies in Ahmedabad. The research examines the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance and evaluates the association between demographic factors and this relationship. Data were collected from 120 employees working in IT companies in Ahmedabad, and Spearman's correlation and chi-square analysis were employed to analyse the findings. The results reveal significant insights into the interplay between emotional intelligence and performance metrics, highlighting the importance of emotional intelligence in enhancing employee productivity and adaptability. These findings contribute to the growing body of literature on emotional intelligence and provide actionable recommendations for organizations aiming to foster high-performing teams.

KEYWORDS: Emotional Intelligence, Employee Performance, Organizational Productivity, IT Companies

1. INTRODUCTION

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions while also being able to recognize, understand, and influence the emotions of others. Introduced by psychologists Peter Salovey and John Mayer, and popularized by Daniel Goleman, emotional intelligence is often regarded as a critical component of personal and professional success. Unlike cognitive intelligence (IQ), which primarily measures intellectual capabilities, EI focuses on emotional and interpersonal skills that play a pivotal role in human interactions. At its core, emotional intelligence comprises five key components: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Self-awareness allows individuals to understand their emotions, triggers, and how they affect others. Self-regulation involves managing emotions, maintaining control in challenging situations, and adapting to change. Motivation within the EI framework goes beyond external rewards and involves the internal drive to achieve goals and remain optimistic even in the face of setbacks. Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others, fostering deeper connections and trust. Finally, social skills enable effective communication, conflict resolution, and teamwork.

The significance of emotional intelligence is particularly evident in the workplace. Employees with high EI are better equipped to handle stress, collaborate with colleagues, and

adapt to organizational changes. Leaders with strong emotional intelligence can inspire and motivate their teams, navigate conflicts, and create an environment of mutual respect and trust. Studies have consistently shown that emotional intelligence is a strong predictor of job performance, often surpassing IQ in determining professional success. In personal life, emotional intelligence contributes to healthier relationships, improved communication, and a better ability to cope with life's challenges. People with high EI are often more resilient, able to navigate complex social dynamics, and exhibit greater empathy, which enhances their social bonds. By understanding and managing their emotions effectively, individuals can avoid impulsive decisions and foster meaningful connections with others.

Developing emotional intelligence is an ongoing process that requires self-reflection and practice. Techniques such as mindfulness, active listening, and seeking feedback can significantly enhance EI. Mindfulness helps individuals become more attuned to their emotions, while active listening promotes empathy and understanding. Constructive feedback from trusted sources provides valuable insights into areas for improvement.

Overall, emotional intelligence is an indispensable skill that transcends professional and personal boundaries. It influences how individuals perceive and respond to emotions, interact

with others, and achieve their goals. By cultivating emotional intelligence, people can unlock their potential for growth, foster stronger relationships, and contribute positively to their communities and organizations. As the modern world increasingly values collaboration, adaptability, and empathy, emotional intelligence has emerged as a cornerstone of success in all facets of life.

2. NEED OF THE STUDY

In today's highly dynamic and competitive work environment, the Information Technology (IT) sector is characterized by rapid innovation, intense deadlines, and continuous collaboration. These factors demand not only technical expertise but also the ability to navigate complex interpersonal and emotional dynamics. Employees in IT companies often face high levels of stress, frequent organizational changes, and the necessity to work effectively in teams. In such a scenario, emotional intelligence (EI) emerges as a crucial determinant of individual and organizational performance.

While traditional measures of employee performance focus heavily on cognitive abilities and technical skills, there is growing recognition that emotional intelligence significantly influences how employees manage workplace challenges, interact with colleagues, and contribute to organizational success. Studies suggest that individuals with high EI are better equipped to handle stress, maintain motivation, and build positive relationships within the workplace, leading to enhanced productivity and job satisfaction. Despite this understanding, there remains a lack of comprehensive research exploring the specific impact of emotional intelligence on employee performance, particularly within the IT sector of Ahmedabad. Ahmedabad, being a burgeoning hub for IT companies in India, provides a unique context to study the interplay between emotional intelligence and employee performance. The city's IT workforce is diverse, with employees often working in collaborative, high-pressure, and globally connected environments. Understanding how emotional intelligence affects their performance can provide valuable insights into improving workforce efficiency, reducing employee turnover, and enhancing overall organizational health.

Furthermore, as IT companies increasingly adopt flexible and hybrid work models post-pandemic, emotional intelligence plays an even more critical role in maintaining effective communication, fostering team cohesion, and ensuring employee well-being. This study is essential for addressing the existing gaps in literature and providing actionable insights for HR managers, organizational leaders, and policymakers in the IT sector. By investigating emotional intelligence as a determinant of employee performance, this study aims to not only highlight its importance but also suggest strategies to integrate EI development into employee training programs and performance management systems. Such insights can ultimately contribute to building more resilient, motivated, and high-performing teams within IT companies in Ahmedabad.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Goleman (2015): Goleman explored the role of emotional

intelligence (EI) in workplace performance and highlighted that EI is a critical determinant of employee success in team-oriented tasks and leadership roles. His study emphasized that EI components such as self-awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation directly impact employee collaboration, adaptability, and conflict resolution skills. Goleman's work also found that organizations prioritizing EI development reported improved team dynamics and higher productivity.

Srivastava and Bhardwaj (2016): This study examined the effect of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction and employee performance in Indian IT companies. The authors concluded that employees with high EI exhibit better stress management, improved interpersonal relationships, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. They also found that EI contributes significantly to reducing workplace burnout, thereby improving overall performance metrics.

Kumar and Gupta (2017): Focusing on Indian manufacturing firms, Kumar and Gupta investigated the relationship between EI and employee productivity. Their research revealed that employees with higher levels of EI demonstrated superior performance under high-pressure conditions. They also identified that EI skills, particularly self-motivation and emotional regulation, are crucial for achieving organizational goals. The study highlighted that EI training programs are effective tools for improving workforce efficiency.

Sharma et al. (2018): This study explored the impact of EI on leadership effectiveness and team performance in Indian start-ups. The findings suggested that leaders with high EI fostered more cohesive teams, better communication, and higher employee engagement. The study also noted that EI positively influenced employee satisfaction and retention rates, making it a vital trait for leaders in dynamic and competitive environments like start-ups.

Raj and Thomas (2019): Raj and Thomas investigated the relationship between EI and employee performance in Indian service industries, particularly in customer-facing roles. The study revealed that EI is critical in handling customer interactions, managing conflicts, and achieving service excellence. Employees with high EI were found to be better at maintaining emotional composure, which translated into higher customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Agarwal and Mehta (2020): In their research on the pharmaceutical sector in India, Agarwal and Mehta identified EI as a key driver of sales team performance. The study found that EI components such as empathy and social skills enabled sales professionals to build stronger client relationships, negotiate effectively, and close deals more successfully. The authors recommended integrating EI assessments into recruitment and training processes.

Desai and Patel (2021): This study analysed the role of EI in employee performance in Indian financial institutions. The findings suggested that employees with high EI exhibited greater resilience, adaptability, and decision-making skills

during market volatility. The study concluded that EI is particularly important in high-stakes industries where stress and pressure are common.

4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance in IT companies of Ahmedabad.
2. To find out association between demographic factors of employees and their perception towards relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance.

5. SAMPLE SIZE

In this study, 120 employees working in IT companies based in Ahmedabad have been targeted. The sampling technique used for data collection is Non-Probability Convenience Sampling method. The employees were emailed the questionnaire for the study.

6. DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 Correlation Between EI and EP

Correlations						
			EI 1	EI 2	EP 1	EP 2
Spearman's rho	EI 1	Correlation Coefficient	1	.459**	-0.026	0.101
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.781	0.274
		N	120	120	120	120
	EI 2	Correlation Coefficient	.459**	1	-0.141	0.152
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.125	0.097
		N	120	120	120	120
	EP 1	Correlation Coefficient	-0.026	-0.141	1	-0.155
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.781	0.125		0.090
		N	120	120	120	120
	EP 2	Correlation Coefficient	0.101	0.152	-0.155	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.274	0.097	0.090	
		N	120	120	120	120

EI 1	I can control my emotions effectively during stressful situations at work
EI 2	I actively listen to my colleagues to understand their perspectives
EP 1	I collaborate effectively with my team to achieve project goals
EP 2	I believe that emotional intelligence contributes significantly to my professional success

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence (as measured by self-control and active listening) and employee performance (as measured by collaboration and belief in emotional intelligence contributing to success).

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant relationship

between emotional intelligence (as measured by self-control and active listening) and employee performance (as measured by collaboration and belief in emotional intelligence contributing to success).

Interpretation

The Spearman's rho correlation matrix provides insights into the relationships between dimensions of emotional intelligence and employee performance in the context of IT professionals. The analysis reveals both significant and non-significant correlations, which highlight how different aspects of emotional intelligence interact with employee performance metrics.

The correlation coefficient between the ability to control emotions during stressful situations and actively listening to colleagues is **0.459** with a p-value of **0.000**, indicating a statistically moderate relationship. This suggests that employees who are better at managing their emotions during stress are also likely to actively listen to their colleagues, which is crucial for fostering a collaborative work environment. Emotional self-control appears to support interpersonal skills, enhancing teamwork and mutual understanding.

On the other hand, the correlation between controlling emotions effectively during stress and collaborating with the team to achieve project goals is **-0.026**, with a p-value of **0.781**. This result indicates a negligible and statistically insignificant relationship. It suggests that emotional self-control alone may not directly predict an individual's ability to collaborate effectively, pointing to the possibility that other factors, such as communication skills or role-specific competencies, play a more direct role in determining team collaboration.

The relationship between active listening and collaboration shows a weak negative correlation (**-0.141**) with a p-value of **0.125**, which is not statistically significant. This implies that active listening, while an essential component of emotional intelligence, does not necessarily translate into effective collaboration in this sample. The results might suggest that while individuals may listen well, there may be other barriers such as interpersonal dynamics, organizational culture, or resource constraints affecting collaboration.

Lastly, the correlation between believing that emotional intelligence contributes significantly to professional success and the ability to collaborate effectively with the team is weakly negative (**-0.155**) with a p-value of **0.090**, indicating a marginally significant relationship. This finding could suggest a complex interaction where personal beliefs about emotional intelligence's role in success may not always align with practical collaborative behaviours.

Interestingly, the belief in the significance of emotional intelligence for professional success is weakly and positively correlated with controlling emotions during stress (**0.101**) and actively listening (**0.152**), but these relationships are not statistically significant (p-values of **0.274** and **0.097**, respectively). This highlights that while employees may intellectually acknowledge the importance of emotional

intelligence, this belief does not strongly predict their emotional or interpersonal behaviours in practice.

6.2 Impact of Demographic Variables on EI

6.2.1 Age

H₀ : There is no association between age of the respondents and their belief that employees with higher emotional intelligence perform better in stressful and high-pressure situations.

Crosstab				
Count				
		Employees with higher emotional intelligence perform better in stressful and high-pressure situations.		Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	
Age	18 to 25 Years	11	8	19
	26 to 35 Years	36	14	50
	35 to 45 Years	13	14	27
	More than 45 Years	8	16	24
Total		68	52	120

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.918 ^a	3	.012
Likelihood Ratio	11.111	3	.011
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.574	1	.010
N of Valid Cases	120		

The chi-square value is **10.918**, and the p-value is **0.012**. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis (H₀). This indicates a significant association between the age of the respondents and their belief that employees with higher emotional intelligence perform better in stressful and high-pressure situations. It suggests that respondents' perspectives on the importance of emotional intelligence vary meaningfully across different age groups.

6.2.2 Gender

H₀: There is no association between gender of the respondents and their belief that employees with higher emotional intelligence perform better in stressful and high-pressure situations.

Crosstab				
Count				
		Employees with higher emotional intelligence perform better in stressful and high-pressure situations.		Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	
Gender	Male	47	46	93
	Female	21	6	27
	Total	68	52	120

Age	Male	47	46	93
	Female	21	6	27
Total		68	52	120

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.323 ^a	3	.012
Likelihood Ratio	6.697	3	.010
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.270	1	.012
N of Valid Cases	120		

The chi-square value is **6.323**, and the p-value is **0.012**. With a p-value less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis (H₀). This result signifies that gender has a significant influence on the belief that employees with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to handle stressful and high-pressure scenarios. Male and female respondents may differ in their perceptions of the role of emotional intelligence in managing stress.

6.2.3 Marital Status

H₀: There is no association between marital status of the respondents and their belief that employees with higher emotional intelligence perform better in stressful and high-pressure situations.

Crosstab				
Count				
		Employees with higher emotional intelligence perform better in stressful and high-pressure situations.		Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	
Marital Status	Married	30	27	57
	Unmarried	32	16	48
	Widow	2	4	6
	Divorcee	4	5	9
Total		68	52	120

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.211 ^a	3	.240
Likelihood Ratio	4.246	3	.236
Linear-by-Linear Association	.076	1	.783
N of Valid Cases	120		

The chi-square value is **4.211**, and the p-value is **0.24**. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis (H₀). This means there is no significant association between marital status and the belief that employees with higher emotional intelligence perform better in stressful situations. Respondents' marital status does not appear to impact their views on the importance of emotional intelligence in handling pressure.

6.2.4 Education Qualification

H_0 : There is no association between education of the respondents and their belief that employees with higher emotional intelligence perform better in stressful and high-pressure situations.

Crosstab				
Count				
		Employees with higher emotional intelligence perform better in stressful and high-pressure situations.		Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	
Education Qualification	Graduate	7	7	14
	Post-Graduate	32	30	62
	Other	29	15	44
Total		68	52	120

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.429 ^a	2	.297
Likelihood Ratio	2.458	2	.293
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.999	1	.157
N of Valid Cases	120		

The chi-square value is **2.429**, and the p-value is **0.297**. With a p-value exceeding 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis (H_0). This indicates that there is no significant relationship between the educational qualifications of respondents and their belief that emotional intelligence contributes to better performance under stress. Respondents' beliefs are consistent regardless of their level of education.

6.2.5 Years of Experience

H_0 : There is no association between years of experience of the respondents and their belief that employees with higher emotional intelligence perform better in stressful and high-pressure situations.

Crosstab				
Count				
		Employees with higher emotional intelligence perform better in stressful and high-pressure situations.		Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	
Years of Experience	Less than 5 Years	32	18	50
	5 to 15 Years	23	15	38
	15 to 25 Years	7	11	18
	More than 25 Years	6	8	14
Total		68	52	120

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.730 ^a	3	.193
Likelihood Ratio	4.713	3	.194
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.756	1	.053
N of Valid Cases	120		

The chi-square value is **4.73**, and the p-value is **0.193**. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis (H_0). This result demonstrates that there is no significant association between respondents' years of experience and their belief that employees with higher emotional intelligence perform better under high pressure. Perspectives on this topic are not influenced by professional experience.

7. CONCLUSION

Conclusion Based on Spearman's rho Correlations

The analysis of the relationships between emotional intelligence and employee performance in the context of IT companies yields mixed results. The most notable finding is the statistically significant positive relationship between controlling emotions in stressful situations and active listening. This indicates that employees who can regulate their emotions are more likely to engage in active listening, a critical skill for fostering workplace harmony and collaboration. These results highlight the interconnected nature of emotional intelligence traits and suggest that improving one aspect, such as emotional regulation, may positively influence other interpersonal skills. However, other correlations, such as the relationship between emotional self-control and collaboration or between collaboration and active listening, were weak and statistically insignificant. This suggests that emotional intelligence traits alone may not directly influence team-oriented behaviours like collaboration. Instead, these behaviours could be shaped by factors such as organizational culture, job roles, or external stressors. Interestingly, the belief that emotional intelligence contributes to professional success was weakly correlated with other traits, highlighting a possible gap between employees' perceptions and their practical applications of emotional intelligence. These findings emphasize the need for IT companies to adopt a nuanced approach to employee development. While emotional intelligence is undoubtedly important, it should be integrated with training in other interpersonal and technical skills to maximize its impact on employee performance. A comprehensive development program can help bridge the gap between perception and practice, enabling employees to better harness emotional intelligence in their professional roles.

Conclusion Based on Demographic Findings

The demographic analysis provides further insights into how personal characteristics influence beliefs about the role of emotional intelligence in managing stress and high-pressure situations. The findings reveal a significant association between age and the belief that employees with higher emotional intelligence perform better in such scenarios. This suggests that perspectives on emotional intelligence and its importance may evolve with age, potentially reflecting the accumulation

of workplace experiences and exposure to high-stress environments. Older respondents might have witnessed or personally experienced the advantages of emotional intelligence in handling workplace challenges, leading to stronger convictions about its role in performance. Similarly, there is an association between gender and the belief in emotional intelligence's role in stress management. This may point to differences in how men and women perceive and value emotional intelligence in professional settings. It is possible that societal norms and workplace dynamics influence these perceptions, with one gender perhaps experiencing greater recognition of the need for emotional intelligence in high-pressure situations. Understanding these differences can help organizations tailor their training programs to be inclusive and responsive to diverse perspectives. Conversely, the lack of association between marital status, education, and years of experience and beliefs about emotional intelligence indicates that these factors do not significantly shape respondents' perceptions. This finding underscores that beliefs about emotional intelligence are not necessarily linked to an individual's educational background, marital life, or tenure in the workforce. Instead, other variables, such as personal values, workplace culture, or exposure to emotional intelligence training, may play a more significant role.

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